

REMARKS

This Amendment is filed in response to the final Office Action dated January 29, 2008, and is respectfully submitted to be fully responsive to the rejections raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits and allowance are respectfully requested.

In the present Amendment, claim 1 has been canceled.

Claim 2 has been re-written in independent form.

Claims 3, 5 and 12 have been amended to depend from independent claim 2.

No new matter has been added. Entry of the Amendment is respectfully submitted to be proper. Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 2, 3, 5, and 12-14 will be all the claims pending in the application.

Applicants acknowledge and thank the Examiner for withdrawing the Section 102(b) rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 12-14 in paragraph 8 of the Office Action dated December 19, 2006.

I. Response to Objections to the Specification

The specification is objected to for informalities pertaining to the abstract of the disclosure.

A new Abstract of the Disclosure is submitted with the present Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. However, Applicants respectfully submit that an Abstract of the Disclosure was submitted in a Preliminary Amendment filed on January 16, 2004, which was directed to the issues raised in the final Office Action dated January 29, 2008. Thus, it appears that the Abstract in the Preliminary Amendment was not considered and may not have been entered. To advance prosecution, Applicants submit a new Abstract in response to the Examiner's objection in paragraph 6 of the final Office Action dated January 29, 2008. Consideration and entry of the Abstract is respectfully requested.

II. Response to Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1 and 12-14 are rejection on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-9 of U.S. Patent 6,965,473.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is rendered moot by entry of the amendments to the claims which cancel claim 1 and amend claim 12 to depend from claim 2. Furthermore, Applicants submit that claim 2, which incorporates claim 1 and recites further patentable features, is patentable as acknowledged by the Examiner. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully submitted.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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